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same man every time—sends for the complainant and the accused, and after hearing the parties decides the case with the help of the village elders, who as a rule agree with his decision.

The jurisdiction of the village panchayat is confined to the village itself, and a local village panchayat is never referred to for the decision of a case by persons at a distance. A group of about 50 to 100 villages is constituted into what is locally called a *patti*, and this *patti* acknowledges the authority of the chief religious and social headman of the group, who is called the *Sendhia*. The *Sendhia* is the chief priest and judge of the *patti*. Every marriage contracted, every case of social misdemeanour involving the penalty of a fine, and every other social and religious function performed in any village of the *patti* yields the *Sendhia* a fixed fee in cash, ranging from Rs. 2 to Rs. 10, and in some exceptional cases up to Rs. 50. The office of the *Sendhia* is also hereditary, and the *Sendhia* is the dominant authority in the *patti*. The authority of the *Sendhia* (for purposes of a Panchayat) is invoked only in exceptional cases involving the interests of a number of villages, and in such cases the decision of the *Sendhia* on an appeal being made to him by or against a village panchayat (or a number of village panchayats) is final. For purposes of a panchayat therefore each *patti* forms a distinct unit, the internal composition of which is as follows :—

(a) Each village holds its own panchayat composed of a few village elders and presided over by the village headman (*gaita*).

(b) Each group of villages acknowledges the authority of the *Sendhia*, who is the court of appeal for difficult or intricate intra-communal disputes.

(c) Each *Sendhia's patti* is, as a rule, a compact block of country, sharply defined by prominent natural geographical boundaries (a range of hills, a large river or a nullah), and the *Sendhia's* authority is confined to his own *patti*.

The affairs of one *Sendhia's patti* are never referred to a *Sendhia* of another *patti*. Each *patti* is known by its local geographical name (such as the Lahiri *patti*, the Vennasugar *patti*, the Jarawandi *patti*, the Ghat *patti*, and so forth), and each *patti* is the sole undisputed domain of the local *Sendhia*. The only remarkable case of an exception to this general rule that occurred within the memory of living man was during the cold weather of 1909 at the village of Kotmi, which belongs to the Vennasugar *patti*. A Maria's daughter of the village eloped with a Mussalman. The local village panchayat took a feast from the father of the girl, and fined him an amount adequate enough for the dues of the *Sendhia*. The *Sendhia* demanded more and censured the village panchayat for having let the man off with a light amount. The village panchayat considered the *Sendhia's* demands to be exorbitant, and threatened to alienate themselves from him and to invoke the aid of a foreign *Sendhia*. This was too much for the *Sendhia*, who directly excommunicated the whole village panchayat. The panchayat therefore sent for the *Sendhia* of Judt, who naturally refused to affiliate the village to his *patti*, but, seeing the difficulties of the case, agreed to purify the culprit for a small fee, which was paid to him. He performed the necessary ceremonies and reclaimed the unfortunate father of the girl. Thereupon the whole *patti* of Vennasugar rose against the village of Kotmi, and threatened to use violence. This caused some uneasiness to the police, who began sending in reports. The Manager of the Ahiri estate went to the spot, and his camp was immediately besieged by about a hundred *Gaitas* of the *patti*, headed by the *Sendhia*, who clamoured for justice. Their complaint was that the village people of Kotmi had set a bad example, and that the people of the *patti* would know no rest till they (the Kotmi people) got themselves purified by the *Sendhia*. The Marias of Kotmi were, on their part, too obstinate to yield, and with great difficulty the Manager succeeded in effecting a compromise by prevailing upon the *Sendhia* to reduce his demands. He agreed ultimately to give absolution for a nominal amount, which was paid by the girl's father, and thus ended in a merry drinking bout what threatened to be a small civil war. The next

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morning the *Sendhia* repeated the necessary spells, and, collecting together all the *Gaitas* of the *patti* with the Kotmi fellows, sprinkled fresh well water over their heads and declared Kotmi as re-affiliated to his *patti*.

'This specific instance illustrates not only the great power exercised by the *Sendhia* in his *patti* but also the fact that it is impossible for a village to alienate itself from a *patti* or to disregard the authority of a *Sendhia*.'

The South Chanda *patti* thus described seems to be very like the clan-*pargana* of the neighbouring Bastar Hill Marias, though much larger, if the figure of from 50 to 100 villages in each *patti* is correct. Actually, however, the *patti* probably includes several clan-areas or, at all events, villages of several clans, though I have not been able to make any enquiries in Chanda. The designation *Sendhia* is used in the Bhopalpatnam zamindari of Bastar for the headmen appointed by past zamindars over the local Naikpod, Kapewar, Barod and Dolod (Pardhan) castes; among Bastar Marias, however, the term appears to be used only in the Kutru Mar *pargana*, of which Arki Burga of Jegur, a village south of the Indrawati, was in 1930 the hereditary *sendhia*. But his sole function was the reclamation of any Maria guilty of a breach of social rules, and he had no other rights or authority, nor was his presence essential in any *panchayat* except one convened to deal with cases of outcasting. He was in no sense a headman of the *pargana*, and had none of the authority of the *sendhia* of Chanda or the *pargania majhi* or headman of the Maria and Muria *parganas* of Antagarh, Kondagaon, Jagdalpur and Dantewara tahsils in Bastar. In fact, there were no *pargana* headmen for the Kutru Mar and Bhairamgarh Mar *parganas* of Kutru zamindari, the *gaita* of the parent or principal village of a clan being the nearest approach to a *pargana* headman; when Arki Burga was asked to become *pargana* headman he refused; the little actual influence he possessed over the Kutru Mar *pargana* was shown by the fact that he had left the *pargana* to live at Jegur. The headmen of the Hill Maria *parganas* of Antagarh tahsil are sometimes called *sethia*.

In the two Hill Maria *parganas* of Kutru the village *gaita* is often still both religious and secular headman. The clans are small, and their villages not always contiguous. The *gaita* of the parent village may not actually decide all cases from each of the other villages, but he can interfere with the decisions of the *gaita* and elders of the other villages, and the latter often refer cases to him; for the decision of such cases he sits in *panchayat* with the *gaitas* of all the other villages of his clan. Examples of these small clan groups are the Gumelor villages of Dunga, Pariakot and Goti in Bhairamgarh Mar and the Mohanda villages of Lakka, Puslakka and Bhuri in Kutru Mar; of the former group the headman of Pariakot is the head *gaita*, though Dunga is the parent village, for the ancestor of

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the headman of Pariakot was headman of Dunga when he founded Pariakot from Dunga; of the latter group the headman of Lakka, the parent village, is the head *gaita*, and has since been appointed *pargana* headman of the Kutru Mar *pargana* as the most influential headman in the *pargana*. In these cases, as generally among Hill Marias, the *waddai* or clan-priest is not the headman of the clan. But the Marias of Kutru south of the Indrawati and of the adjacent parts of Bijapur who are of Hill Maria origin modified in culture by contact with Bison-horn Maria and other neighbours, have usually their *waddai*, by them designated *modul wadde*, as the secular head of the clan as well as clan-priest. The names and villages of most of these clans have been given in the footnote to page 202. The post is hereditary, but the holder is sometimes deposed if he does not duly propitiate the clan-god or is oppressive. In matters affecting the State and in ordinary village routine he has no authority (unless he has been recognized as *pargana* headman), the village *pedа* and *perma* being supreme; and in ordinary village *panchayats* he probably takes no part, except in his own village, and even there probably only as a member, the *pedа* being the president. As social arbiter he decides tribal cases, such as breaches of social rules and marriage disputes, at the annual harvest festival, there known as the *Pindi Pandum*, with the aid of a clan *panchayat* of the leading *pedas* and *permas* of the clan villages.

Among the Hill Marias of Antagarh tahsil, that is to say of the greater part of the Abujhmar hills, we have seen that the *parganas* are clan-areas, the exception being the large Chhota Dongar *pargana*, where, however, the Usendi clan predominates and is recognized by the other clans as the chief clan of the *pargana*. The man now recognized by the State as the *parganis majhi* or headman of each of these *parganas* is the hereditary clan headman or *parganis gaita*. He is the chief headman of the village headmen of his clan rather than clan headman, for, though orders issue as his orders, they are issued always after consultation with a *panchayat* of the leading headmen, religious and secular, and elders of the villages in the clan-area. Any attempt on the part of a *parganis gaita* to presume on his position to make himself a little chief or tyrant is fiercely resisted by the clan; one of the reasons for the 1916 murder at Orcha of Usendi Bhosa, the headman of the Chhota Dongar *pargana*, was the belief that he was trying to 'set up a *raj* over Metabhum'. Similarly in villages the headman's authority is rather that of the spokesman of the village elders than his own individual authority. If the tahsildar sends word to the *parganis gaita* that, for example, a camp or camps have to be prepared in his *pargana* for the Diwan, or that on a certain date each village in the *pargana* has to supply

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men for road repairs, the *pargania gaita* cannot merely send out orders to the headman of each village in his *pargana* assigning his village a share of the *pargana* task. But he has to send out his *garkai* or messenger, a clan servant remunerated in grain at two or three *pailî* per cultivator, to call in the *gaita*, *kasyeq-gaita* and leading elders of each of the clan villages to a meeting at his village or some central spot, at which he arranges the distribution of the work in consultation with them. Similar meetings are called for arranging collections of money or grain for any clan festival, such as Koqsar, or any special disease-averting or tiger-averting ceremony. In a dispute between some of his villagers as to the distribution of the work he naturally would give the final word; and similarly when he calls in selected village *gaitas* to sit with him to decide inter-village disputes or to interfere with what he considers a wrong decision of a village *panchayat* he may have the final word. Strictly speaking, he is at liberty to dissent from the members of his meetings and *panchayats* and to insist on his own view being the final view in the matter; but in practice he would get short shrift if he made a habit of going against the majority. In actual fact, therefore, we have here a tribal organization very similar to that postulated by Mr. C. U. Wills, I.C.S., in his monograph on 'The Territorial System of the Rajput Kingdoms of Medieval Chhattisgarh' (see pages 4 and 33 above) as the foundation on which the Chhattisgarh Maharajas superimposed their roughly feudal system. In the village the *kasyeq-gaita* or the *gaita* is merely *primus inter pares* in regard to the village elders and in the clan or *pargana* the *pargania gaita* in regard to the *gaitas* and *kasyeq-gaitas* of the other villages of the clan or *pargana*. The natural democratic tendencies of the tribe not only are a bulwark against mismanagement by State officials, but also block any attempt on the part of a village or *pargana* headman to become a local despot. We have seen already[1] how even when the *kasyeq-gaita* of the village enthroned on his *udam-garia* stone seat of honour at the Koqsar festival announces the agricultural programme of the coming year he is issuing no independent orders, but merely confirming *ex cathedra* the decisions already reached in *panchayat* between him and the elders. These stone seats for the *kasyeq-gaita* and *gaita* are almost the only outward sign of their primacy in their villages; and in some villages they sit on them also to preside over meetings of the elders for administrative or judicial work. The photograph on plate XXIII opposite this page shows the *kasyeq-gaita* and *gaita* of Itulnar thus seated in *panchayat*.

In the Bison-horn Maria country there are no contiguous clan or phratry areas, and the *parganas* often represent former petty

[1] See page 141.

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622 kingdoms or *garhs* of forgotten chiefs, or divisions of the early
623 medieval Telanga kingdoms of Barsur, Dantewara or Bhairamgarh.
632 The Marias there are perhaps later arrivals, spread over a land once ruled by comparatively civilized and organized Telanga princes. There are *pargana* headmen, with wide influence and authority; but their authority possibly does not derive in the same sense from the clan, and may have been conferred in the not very distant past by the State because of the obvious advantages of having such central intermediaries between the State and the tribes. They have to deal with villages of many different clans, and far larger villages at that than those of the Hill Marias. These villages are still throwing off new *para* or hamlets, which often become bigger than the parent village, and soon for practical reasons have to have their own *peda* and *perma*, though these will be called the *chudala*, or small, in contrast to the *birya*, or big, *peda* and *perma* of the parent village. Among the Bison-horn Marias, therefore, it is natural to find the village *panchayat* exercising a more real authority and greater independence of the *pargana* headman and *panchayat* than among the Hill Marias. Nevertheless the formal recognition under the recent State orders of the *pargana* headman and his *panchayat* as a court of appeal from the judicial decisions of the village elders is bound to strengthen his position. The Bison-horn Maria has always been more in contact with and more ready to learn from the outside world than the Hill Maria, and there are many village and *pargana* headmen who show real leadership and force of character.

689 Social offences involving exclusion from tribal ceremonies and
564 feasts are very similar in these days to those of neighbouring Hindu
684 castes. The worst offences are to get maggots in wounds, to take
688 food from or have sexual relations with persons of the despised Ghasia, Mahra or Lohar castes, and to break the rules of exogamy by having sexual relations with a girl of a brother-clan. Another offence, which among the Bison-horn Marias may lead to considerable trouble, is the eating of any new crop or the cutting of grass or bamboo before the appropriate *pandum* has been celebrated; this form of sacrilege is believed to be avenged by the earth or clan-god sending tigers to carry off cattle or men, and in a case which came before me in which such a visitation had followed the cutting of grass by two villagers before the Kare Pandum the *panchayat* had ordered them to compensate the owner of each cow or bullock killed by the avenging tigers. The way in which breaches of the rules of exogamy are dealt with has already been described
689 (pages 245-6 above). Any form of social relations with Ghasia,
564 Mahra or Lohar, however unwitting, entails penalties not only
783 on the actual offender, but also often on his near kinsmen. In the

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Lists of Hill Maria Clans and Bison-horn Maria Clans and Phratries, and Pedigree of the Hill Maria Family holding the Hereditary Headmanship of Chhota Dongar Pargana and Orcha Village

[(d) Signifies that the village was deserted in 1934]

Hill Maria Clans

Clan	Pargana	Villages	Clan-god	Totem
Usendi	Chhota Dongar	Orcha Japgunda Hoinar (d) Juwada Dugarli Bagom Thadur Machan Duseli Kejang (d) Uragonda (d)	Wikir Hunga (kept at Japgunda, but brought to Orcha for festivals)	Goat
	Kutru Mar	Michwada	None	
	Kirangal (not *Hill Maria but Gotul Muria*)	One or two villages	?	
	Chanda District	?	?	
Wadder	Chhota Dongar	Dhanora Jori Hikpalla Kodeli Perilmeta Rengabera (d)	Worship the Usendi god Wikir Hunga of Japgunda	None
	Bhomra (Muria)	Kurselhur	Use Dokra of Kurselhur	
	Chanda District, and Kutru S. of Indrawati	Kaunde and others, and Madhepar and a few more in Kutru	Kuwo-Gundo of Kaunde	
Korami	Chhota Dongar	Hirangal Verma	Worship the Usendi god of Japgunda	None

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Clan	Pargana	Villages	Clan-god	Totem
Dodi	Do.	Jhara Rajpur Idnar	Do.	None
Doda	Chhota Dongar	Kurmer Dedalur	Nule Harma or Eram Mo'itto of Kurmer	None
Parsai	Do.	Chalcheghi	Do.	None
Katlami	Do.	Jhori Hikpulla (shared with Wadder)	Pandu Hunga of Jhori, elder brother of Wikir Hunga, the Usendi god	None
Jugho, *alias* Karme (plural, Jughalor)	Chhota Dongar Bhairamgarh Mar	Adeq Karanmeta (d) Akmeta (d) Maspur (d) Nelanar Makawada Gomagal Hasnar Rainar Gapa (d) Itulnar	Worships the Usendi god Wikir Hunga of Japgunda Say would worship Wikir Hunga if still in Chhota Dongar *pargana*, but no need as now in Kutru zamindari	None; the name Karme said to mean 'sunset', the ancestor of clan having been born then
Dhurwa (almost a branch of Jughalor)	Chhota Dongar	Share Gomagal and Hasnar with Jughalor	Worship the Usendi god Wikir Hunga of Japgunda but have also his sister Oghal Mutta as their own god	None; clan says it is elder brother of Jughalor

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Clan	Pargana	Villages	Clan-god	Totem
Dol ('younger brothers' of Jughalor)	Do.	Kohkapaghai	Worship Usendi god Wikir Hunga	Called Dol because members started making *dol* drums
Matami	Do.	Teknar	Do.	None
Dugher	Do.	Maramnar	Do.	None
Potawi	Do.	Almost extinct; one house in Orcha	Do.	None
Poyami	Do.	Kundali (one house)	Do.	None
Gecha	Do. Mangnar	Udala Tondawada Wetekal (d)	Do.	None. Name means 'sluggard' clan
Neghal	Chhota Dongar	Bhera Tondawada	Do.	Panther
Ahkal	Do.	Gudadi	Do.	None
Ete[1]	Do.	Kondakoti	Nule Harma of Kurmer	? Crab
Boka	Do.	Dondrewada Bokalur		None
Kohla	Chhota Dongar	Mandali Kushnar Batwada Kostari Gumter Hoinger Devanar Kerimar Irpenar	Mu'ima Kohla Pen of Batwada	?
Padál	Padalibhum	All the *pargana*	Gumtuli Muttai, of Adnar	None
Kumoti	Chhota Dongar	Almost extinct; 2 houses in Hannar, 1 in Rainar	None	None
Játi	Játwara	Most of the *pargana*	?	?

[1] Ete is probably the same as Yete, a Kutru Mar clan.

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Clan	Pargana	Villages	Clan-god	Totem
Boter	Kutru Mar	Boter	None	None
Wachami	Kutru Mar and Ahiri (mostly Indrawati valley)	Kumharmeta Markanar Irkapal Karkelli Bodeli and some Ahiri villages	Wachami Moitto Pen of Kumharmeta	?
Mohanda	Kutru Mar	Lakka Hingmeta Bhuri Puslakka	A god at Lakka	?
Oyami	Bhairamgarh Mar	Komu Kalhasa Malahanar (d)	None	None
Mohke	Do. Chhota Dongar	2 houses in Kalhasa Albera (d)	None	None
Yete	Bhairamgarh Mar	Hoinar	None	Crab
Pungati	Do.	2 houses in Ader (Kutru)	None	?
Bardal	Bardal Tapalibhum	Whole pargana Ranimarka	Hurra Mu'iya of Kornar	None
Farsal	Farsal Bhairamgarh	Whole pargana (13 inhabited villages) Bheriabhum	Kodo Mo'itto of Dhurwada None	None
Gotal	Hukkagotal Tulsgotal Parsigotal	Whole pargana (9 inhabited villages) Whole pargana (9 inhabited villages) Whole pargana (5 inhabited villages)	Pahanleya Muttari of Toinar in Tulsgotal Do. Top Mudya of Mohandi, said to be younger brother of Pahanley's husband	None None None

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Clan	Parganа	Villages	Clan-god	Totem
Tapa	Tapalibhūm (Chhote Mar)	Nearly all the villages of the *pargana*	Rikaa Pen of Dodrimarka in Tapalibhum	None
Nughoti, *alias* Nuroti	Nurbhum jātwara Tapalibhum	All *pargana* but Turko Kohkameta Markawada Hachekote	?	None
Hichami	Nurbhum	Turko	The Nughoti god	?
Parlio	Kutru Mar	Dodmarka Karangul Nugur Ader (Kutru) Padmeta	Koruk Pen of Karangal and Nugur	Goat
Jātā	Kutru Mar Chhote Dongar	Jātalur Akdum (d)	None	?
Kohka	Bhairamgarh Mar	Kakowada, or Kakawoki	None	Kohka-marra the marking-nut tree
Ark	Do.	Korowaya; sold Itulnar to Jughalor	None	None
Jāte (plural, Jāterom)	Mangnar	Mornar	Pat Raja	The Jāte grass used for making brooms to sweep the god's shrine
Tokalor	Mangnar	Erpanar	Do.	The *toka* or flap of loin-cloth left to hang behind like a tail
Hukur	Mangnar	Erpanar	Do.	The *huk* or basketry ladle used to stir rice cooked at the god's shrine

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Clan	Pargana	Villages	Clan-god	Totem
Marvi	Mangnar	Tökhtöll Kuwer Modangwada Moghuri	Mārī-māgh, Pat Raja's sister's son or *bārsajal*. They get leave from Pat Raja to hold his nephew's festivals	?
Tamo	Dantewara Mar	Tumirgunda Padmeta	Hurra Gunda Moitto of Tumirgunda	None
Atami[1]	Barsur	Chhota Karka Palawaya	Do.	?
Lekami[1]	Barsur	Batawada Ghotpal	Use Modia of Ghotpal	?

There were one or two Lekami houses in the Hill Maria villages of Handawada and Dunga.

Ganse	Dantewara or Barsur Mar	Toinar Handawada Hikul Thakawada Paralnar Prinkapal Kodokal Hitawada	Verma Mo'itto Pen of Toinar. The *maddai* is jātā by clan	None
	Bhairamgarh	Kunjewada Goti Dunga Pariakot	None	
Alami	Mangnar	Nendur Gatla	Attend festivals of Pat Raja, god of jāt-erom at Mornar	Chameleon (ālām)
Nonde	Mangnar	Rotad	Do.	Rope

[1] Now, in culture, Bison-horn clans; but the Lekami intermarries with the Ganse clan, and the Atami still worships the Hill Maria *pen* of the Tamo clan.

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PEDIGREE OF THE

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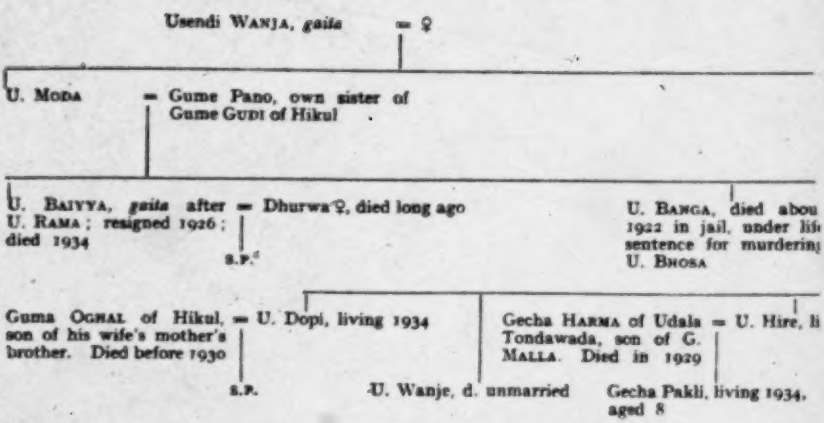
Usendi WANJA, *gaita* = ♀
U. MODA = Gume PANO, own sister of Gume GUDI of Hikul
U. BAIYYA, *gaita* after U. RAMA; resigned 1926; died 1934 = Dhurwa ♀, died long ago
S.P.
U. BANGA, died abou 1922 in jail, under lif sentence for murderin U. BHOSA
Guma OGNAL of Hikul, son of his wife's mother's brother. Died before 1930 = U. Dopi, living 1934
S.P.
U. Wanje, d. unmarried
Gecha HARMA of Udala Tondawada, son of G. MALLA. Died in 1929 = U. Hire, li
Gecha Pakli, living 1934, aged 8

[p. 306(A)]

U. B
killed
accid
salphi

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GREE OF THE ORCHA FAMILY IN WHICH SUCCESSION TO *PARGANA* AN

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J. BANGA, died about 922 in jail, under life entence for murdering J. BHOSA = Gume Ippo, d. of his mother's brother, G. GUDI of Hikul. Living 1934, nearly 80

of Udala = U. Hire, living n of G. in 1929

cha Pakli, living 1934. d 8

U. MODA, about 55 in 1934, released in 1926 after 10 years of life entence for U. BHOSA's murder. *Gaita* since 1928 = ♀ = (2) Gecha Kowe, own sister of his brother-in-law Gecha HARMA, married year after him and Hire. Living 1934, about 34

U. IRKA, 8 years old in 1934 — U.

♀

(U. BHOSA's magic was said to have killed this wife and daughter)

U. BHOSA, became *gaita* when in about 1910 U. BAIYYA, his first cousin, resigned, and was appointed *parganis* (*pargana* headman). Murdered in 1916 for magic and 'trying to set up a *raj* over Metabhum'; was then 60 = Potawi Kane, d. of P. MURRA of Tulur hamlet of Orcha. Living in 1934 in part of U. POLA's house and cooking for him, but not as his wife

U. BARANGA, said to have killed himself in 1927 by accidentally falling from a *salpā* tree

U. IRKA, about 18 in 193 brought up by U. POLA, uncle

[p. 306(B)]

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RGANA AND FAMILY HEADSHIP IS HEREDITARY

U. RAMA, succ. his father as *gaita*; murdered for magic by U. BANGA in 1926

U. DANGI, died very old in 1933 = Ahkal Nendo, d. of Ahkal MULLA of Godari; still living 1934

Kowe, own brother-in-ARMA, marer him and g 1934.

U. HARMA, d. 1926, just after release from jail for U. BHOSA's murder = Doi Bire, d. of Doi Murral of Kokapar

Son killed by BHOSA's magic

U. KOHLA, d. 1928 became *pargania* and *gaita* in 1916 on BHOSA's murder

s old in U. DÖTI, born in 1932

U. KOSA, 26 in 1934, *pargania* since U. KOHLA's death in 1928. Married in 1929 = Jugho K GUDI of

U. WÄGHÄLL, born 1932

URRA rcha. t of king wife

U. POLA = Dhurwa Burgi, d. of Dhurwa MULLA, kinsman of POLA's mother's father, died in 1919

S.P.

about 18 in 1934; p by U. POLA, his

[p. 306(C)]

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HEREDITARY

U. RAHA, succ. his father as *gaita*; murdered for magic by U. BANGA in 1906 = Dhurwa Kâhpe, d. of Dhurwa MODA of Gomagal

Ahkal Nendo, d. of Ahkal DULLA of Godasi; still living 1934

re, d. of Dol Murrai kapar

U. KOHLA, d. 1928; became *pargania* and *gaita* in 1916 on BHOSA's murder = Guma Mene of Hikal, sister of Guma Oghal, his brother-in-law

SA's

? 'killed by BHOSA's magic'

U. KOSA, 26 in 1934, *pargania* since U. KOHLA's death in 1928. Married in 1929 = Jugho Kohle, d. of Jugho GUDI of Adeq

U. Wâghâll, born 1932

SA = Dhurwa Burgi, d. of Dhurwa MULLA, kinsman of POLA's mother's father, died in 1919

S.P.

[p. 306(D)]

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
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[883] 117 him his chief impression of Delhi, he spoke of the Kutb Minar, which he told me was almost as fine and tall as the factory chimney of the Allapilli saw-mills! Either at Burgi or the next village another phenomenon was a Maria in a good tweed coat above khaki shorts and stockings with flashes, wearing over all an excellent fawn Curzon topi with a dark brown pugaree, far smarter than I have ever owned. I discovered that his clothes had all been given him by the zamindari of Ahiri, when he had become a member of the Sironcha Independent Local Board. That night, still in his fine feathers, he came to see the dancing in my camp at Surjagarh: but as the drumming swelled and the dances warmed up he found himself unable to keep up the detachment appropriate to his pseudo-*sahib* status, and gradually divested himself of topi, coat, shirt and shoes, finally peeling off his shorts to reveal beneath them the usual abbreviated loin-cloth of the Maria, seizing a drum, and joining in the dance: he was then indistinguishable from any other Maria but for his air of authority as a headman, and his 'undress' was typically Maria, as described in the *Gazetteer*[1]:—

291 304 'Their dress is scanty, consisting of a compromise between a *langoti* and a *dhoti*, a strip of cloth wound tightly round the waist in rope-like folds and passed between the legs with the spare end hanging down in front below the knees. Often this garment diminishes to the scantiest rag. They adorn their necks with handsome strings of beads and their arms occasionally with metal and glass bangles. Their ears are pulled out of shape by the weight of numerous brass rings with which they are usually garnished, and occasionally they wear *pagris*.'

● 632 This Independent Local Board for the Sironcha taluq consisted then of eighteen members, of whom only six were aboriginals, although there were 3,354 aboriginal to 2,850 non-aboriginal voters. The aboriginal members were almost all returned unopposed, and were *de facto* the nominees of the zamindar, who had had to use his full influence to persuade them to join this peculiar body! It was in the circumstances no surprise discovery that the open, mainly non-aboriginal, country around Sironcha and Ahiri got far more benefit from the Board's expenditure and services than the wild interior of Ahiri zamindari. But the Maria members were utterly illiterate and at sea in the Board meetings. It was the zamindar's influence alone that secured for the Maria areas such services as the Board gave them. Nevertheless, the mere fact that there is an independent local authority for Sironcha tahsil secures that at least this tahsil does get spent on it all that it pays in cesses and other local taxes, and a fair share of Government grants to local bodies, in marked contrast to the fate of the zamindaris of Garchiroli tahsil, who come under the tender mercies of the Chanda District Council

[1] *Chanda District Gazetteer* (Allahabad, 1909), p. 99.

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
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and see the bulk of the Council's funds, including their own contributions, spent on the open and advanced tracts of the district where the villagers must be placated for political reasons. More will be said on this point later in this Note, in dealing with the Garchiroli zamindaris.

The dancing at Surjagarh stands out in memory as faster and livelier than any other dancing seen on this tour. The drums too were different, great double membrane drums of short sections of *semur* (*bombax malabaricum*) trunks, up to 2 ft. 6 in. or 3 ft. in diameter. The *Gazetteer* well describes the typical Maria dance :—

'The favourite dance is a peculiar rippling step forwards, with the foot dragged, not very graceful when done by a single individual, but looking quite different when done in unison by a great circle of dancers singing a *re-lo, re-lo*, chorus to which the step keeps time. In some villages where the headman is an enthusiast for the pastime a trained band performs weird and wonderful step dances to the sound of the drum. At a big dance the trained band occupies the inner ring round the fire, while the common folk, men and maids, in separate rings move round in great circles in opposite ways. All are dressed for the occasion in their best, bearing in their hands weird ornaments of wicker work, with garlands of flowers on their necks, and, in their hair, feather ornaments humorously or coquettishly placed. Seen in the red glow of a huge log fire, glinting on the shining beads and barbaric ornaments of the dancers, with the throb of the drums, and the beat of many feet moving in unison to the wild music of the voices in chorus, a Maria dance is a spectacle not easily forgotten, but lingers as a characteristic scene when other details have faded from the memory.'[1]

That would well describe that wild night at Surjagarh, when the dancers, their spirits enlivened by several earthen pots of *mahua* liquor, kept up their dancing nearly till dawn. It had been a long and tiring day, and I retired early, the last thing seen from my tent before I closed the flap to shut out the blaze of the many log fires, the dust and the tramp of hundreds of feet, being our now nearly nude Local Board Member, well warmed by liquor and congenial surroundings, leading a ring of dancers and gravely demonstrating the right steps.

Next morning after an early breakfast we climbed with many of the night's dancers up to the keep of the old fort that crowns the Surjagarh hills, 1,273 feet above the forests at their base, the ascent being over what the *Gazetteer*[2] truly calls a noble cliff of black ferruginous mica schist.

'The ascent at first is by a narrow rift in the mountain, whose sides rise vertically on either hand 600 feet in height, and then the path winds round the face of the cliff in natural steps formed by the weathering of the schist. The whole ascent has been carefully fortified by a series of stone breastworks, here thrown across the path, there perched on an overhanging ledge of rock, and if properly defended would be impracticable for troops without means of shelling. Within the keep on the summit there used to be a small tank which

[1] *Chanda District Gazetteer* (Allahabad, 1909), pp. 99-100.
[2] Pp. 418-9.

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
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241 313 unchallenged. I emphasize the word sympathy: the method of threatening and punishing the headmen must be given up, and every effort made to win their understanding support for the new measures and even to entrust them with their execution.

883 The walks and talks at Surjagarh delayed the start on the 32 miles journey to Jawarwandi, and the car and lorry were more than once bogged on the way, so that once again we arrived in camp long after dark. It was on this journey that we crossed the tongues of Bastar territory mentioned on page 378 of this Note: in the southern tongue, in fact, we were bogged for an hour or more, but, as in Bastar, were readily helped to extricate ourselves. I noticed and stopped in *gotul* or bachelors' dormitories in several villages before and after Surjagarh. Many of these are treated by touring officers as though they were rest-huts built for their special convenience, like the *chauri* of Hyderabad or Berar villages. They use them also for posting up legal notices, and in two I found nailed to the wooden posts copies of the *Yudda Samachar* or War News in the Marathi edition published by the provincial War Purposes Fund for dissemination of accurate war information in all villages; this showed singular lack of intelligence on the part of those who controlled such propaganda in Chanda district, for in these Maria villages not a person was literate and very few could speak Marathi. The *gotul* culture here must be similar to that among the Murias just across the Bastar border in North Antagarh, but in the short time available I did not overcome the Marias' natural reluctance to discuss this intimate social organization, a reluctance heightened, I suspect, by the fact that here on the fringes of the *gotul* country the institution is the butt of Hindu ridicule or prurient curiosity. But there certainly are *gotul* in these villages, at least for the youths, and I found one, with some difficulty owing to the reticence of the local Marias in these mixed villages, at Erka in Rangi zamindari. So far as I could make out, they are still to be found in the Partially Excluded zamindaris of Drug.

● 632 Jarawandi is the headquarters of a sub-zamindar holding under Ahiri a taluq of twenty-three villages: the rival claims of Ahiri and Jarawandi to the seignorial dues have been a nuisance to the local Marias. Here there was a large gathering of headmen and *Sendhias* of *patti* groups of villages. Enquiries from them and later at [623] Murumgaon showed that the *panchayat* system described in the extract on pages 286-8 of this book is not only as vigorous as ever, but is more widespread than previously recorded, there being *Sendhias* in almost every Chanda zamindari. It had been stated to me that the zamindars outside Ahiri had usurped the authority of the *Sendhia* and his *patti panchayat*, but I doubt the truth of this, and

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
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the *Sendhias* and the zamindars also denied it. The allegation possibly arises from the fact that the zamindar appoints or confirms the succession of the *Sendhia*, and may arbitrate in a case involving parties from the *patti* of two or more *Sendhias*. Moreover the zamindars themselves have probably often descended from the tribal headmen of old, and so it is easy for them to perform the function of ultimate arbitration in social matters which is so characteristic of the chiefs of the ancient semi-feudal organization of the province from whom they descend or derive. Obviously it would be easy to apply to all the Chanda Maria country the Bastar *panchayat* system.[1]

From Jarawandi our route took us six miles to Pendri, the largest village and virtual headquarters of Jharapapra zamindari, thence six miles to Jharapapra and back; on fifteen miles to Aundhi in Drug district, and thence seven miles to Murumgaon, the headquarters of the Chanda zamindari of that name; the last mile was at long last on made road, the third-class road running east from Garchiroli through Khutgaon, Dudhmala, Dhanora, Rangi, Murumgaon and Koracha zamindaris to Dondi-Lohara and Drug. We were, however, to have trouble on this road next day, when heavy rain flooded unbridged streams between Murumgaon and the twenty miles distant Manpur, the *de facto* headquarters of the Koracha zamindari of Drug. The very long delay in bridging this road and raising it in class is only too typical of the neglect by Government and District Councils of aboriginal areas.

Similarly the District Council had not opened a single school in Jharapapra zamindari. The late zamindar, a Halba by tribe, and amongst the most intelligent and progressive landholders of the two districts, had opened a private school at Pendri[2] which at the time of my visit was being run by a Gondi-speaking teacher of the Marar agricultural caste, and his pupils were six Marar, six Halba and two Pardhan boys. Marias and Halbas are the chief elements in the small population of the zamindari, dwindling steadily by the drift in recent years of Marias across into Bastar for the sake of *podu*.

All along this route there had been frequent pockets of Marar cultivators, especially near the streams. These industrious, progressive, dark-skinned agricultural pioneers have pushed up the valley of every substantial river in the backward areas of Balaghat, Bhandara, Chanda, Drug, Raipur and doubtless other aboriginal districts of the Central Provinces. They have been the chief factor in such increase as there has been of permanent, especially irrigated, cultivation in these Garchiroli and Drug Partially Excluded Areas.

[1] See pp. 295-7.
[2] *Ordnance Survey of India*, Sheet 64D, ref. M(5228

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
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The Court of Wards finally gave the lease to a Hindu of the Kurmi caste, on a premium of Rs. 211. The present lessee, his son, was made protected in 1923. Though the aboriginals as a whole have not actually lost land since 1902, the lessee had been very oppressive, forcing the aboriginals who borrowed from him to surrender their fields to him and then selling them to new tenants. 427

In Panabaras the departmental working of the five teak forests, largely built up, as already stated, by the Court of Wards insisting from 1900 onwards on *podu* cultivators sowing teak-seed on their plots in the second year of cultivation, has done something on Allapilli lines to bring economic relief to the local aboriginals. These four estates have been special targets for the agrarian agitation already mentioned, which started from the adjacent non-excluded Dondi-Lohara zamindari and made a special feature of inciting the Gonds and Marias to burn *podu*. 313

In the Garchiroli zamindaris on the whole the Marias and other aboriginals continue to hold their own and to take gradually to permanent cultivation, though far more slowly than outsiders: in the twenty years after the 1922-3 settlement aboriginal cultivation had increased by only 23 per cent., but non-aboriginal by 50 per cent., there being 6,523 aboriginal tenants of 76,113 acres against 4,012 other tenants of 46,863 acres. The aboriginals still have miles and miles of land available for extending their cultivation, but always hanker after their beloved *podu*. 241 311

This *podu* question, as I have already said, was the principal topic at the conference of the Drug and Chanda Partially Excluded Areas zamindars at Murumgaon on New Year's Day, 1940. Other topics were the neglect of the Garchiroli zamindaris by the Chanda District Council, and the future of the zamindars, in view of the political threat to the whole zamindari system. To deal first with the last topic, let me say that while there may be much to be said for 'liquidation' of big landed estates, especially of absentee proprietors, the policy towards aboriginal zamindars should be different. Most of them are descendants of long lines of tribal chieftains holding estates on very ancient tenures dating back to the semi-tribal, semi-feudal systems[1] under which most of middle India was organised centuries ago. Properly speaking these chiefs in relation to their ryots and fellow tribesmen are *primi inter pares*. Some of the wealthier aboriginal proprietors of the huge Chhattisgarh estates may have aped the princeling: but most of the Chanda zamindars are closely akin to their people—the Rangi chief, for example, is frankly a Maria among Marias—and do their utmost to protect their ryots. Legally, so long as the proprietary rights in any 632

[1] See p. 4.

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
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632 land remain vested in an aboriginal belonging to a tribe notified under the Land Alienation Act of the province, even new tenancies in favour of non-aboriginals require sanction. Often the existence of the aboriginal proprietor is the one thing that saves his fellow tribesmen from being ousted from their lands by Hindu and Muslim incomers. Once he disappears and free alienation of land by aboriginals becomes possible, they will soon sink finally to the level of landless hewers of wood and drawers of water, or at best of factory fodder for Nagpurs and Jamshedpurs. A recent official report on grazing and *nistar*[1] in the zamindaris frankly envisaged the disappearance of the tribal chieftains as probably a good thing; the non-aboriginal who would replace him, it was said, would bring new ideas, new capital, new progress, and therefore it would be better for the villages, which would be well managed by a non-aboriginal instead of being mismanaged or ignored by an aboriginal proprietor. What are the facts? Hardly a single 632 non-aboriginal who in the history of the Central Provinces has 563 elbowed the Gond proprietor out of his estates has done anything for the aboriginal tenantry except to reduce them to debt and helotry. Such new ideas as they have brought into the tribal villages have always tended to destroy or suppress everything good or vital in tribal custom and culture; their 'new progress' has been achieved by getting the aboriginal so heavily into debt that it has been easy to hand over his land to Hindus of castes more acceptable to the new landlord. Nor is it true that there has been no progress under the tribal zamindar: everywhere there has been a steady rise in permanent cultivation, as can clearly be seen from comparing present conditions in such remote estates as these Chanda and Drug zamindaris with the conditions recorded when the Central Provinces were formed in 1861. To the aboriginal also the fact that his *Raja*, as he will always term his zamindar whether or not Government recognize the title, is like him a Korku, a Gond, a Halba or a Maria, has great psychological significance; not all of his tribe are excluded from the seats of the mighty, and a Gond may even rule over a Brahman, and be the final arbiter in the social disputes within his estate not only of his own tribe, but even of Hindu castes. In many zamindaris, notably the Garchiroli estates, Government and District Council alike have neglected communications and nation-building; whatever there is of education and medical relief is even now largely paid for by the zamindar.

[1] *Grazing and Nistar in the Central Provinces Estates, the Report of an Enquiry*, by H. S. Kamath, I.C.S. (Nagpur, Government Printing, 1941); see especially paras. 358-64. *Nistar* means, roughly, tenants' rights of user of forest produce.

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
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I have written elsewhere[1] that the Garchiroli zamindaris afford a typical example of the neglect of aboriginal interests by the District Council; I might truthfully add by the Government also. So far my tour had taken me into Jharapapra and Murumgaon only of these estates; my departure from Murumgaon to Garchiroli was to take me in 37 miles through parts of Rangi, Dhanora, Dudhmala, and Khutgaon zamindaris: I visited Erka in Rangi, Dhanora, Dudhmala and Chatgaon in Khutgaon.[2] At Murumgaon I met almost all the zamindars. Over most of their estates there was no school, hospital or veterinary dispensary, practically no wells had been sunk, and visits of touring public health and veterinary assistants had been rare. The zamindars told me that a number of former schools had been closed on the plea of low attendance, the reason for which was that the children, who knew no language but Maria Gondi, were bored by lessons in the alien Marathi, while the teachers, knowing no Gondi and hating exile in these forest tracts, frequently went sick, generally in name, but often in fact. At Dhanora I found a small school that had just been re-started by the District Council after being closed for six months because no teacher could be found; at last a local untrained Depressed Classes youth had been appointed and had seventeen pupils, of whom five were Marias: it was a dull, ineffective institution. The zamindar of Potegaon said that though two or three years before Government had made a grant for starting an aboriginal school at Potegaon the District Council had provided no teacher; he was paying for one from his own pocket. I have mentioned the private school at Jharapapra which the zamindar himself finances.

High hopes were placed by the first Congress Ministry of the province in the *Vidya Mandir* Act, which provided for a new type of school in villages, intended to pay its way from the produce of lands attached to the school as endowments, and from the yarn to be spun by the pupils whose basic crafts were to be spinning and perhaps agriculture. I saw two of these, for which the zamindars had provided land, at Erka and Chatgaon. The attendance at both was very small, and they were in all ways utterly alien to the Maria way of life. Erka was typical. The *Vidya Mandir* fields were over a mile from the *Mandir*, which in outward appearance was indistinguishable from any ordinary plains village school, even down to the faded Congress flag on the roof. The masters of these institutions bear the time-honoured designation of *guru*. Here,

[1] *The Aboriginal Problem*, pp. 377-8.
[2] The map references on *Ordnance Survey of India*, Qr. Inch Sheet 64D, are Murumgaon MQ5461, Erka MQ4262, Dhanora MQ3652, Dudhmala MQ2849 and Chatgaon MQ2046.

3: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1943
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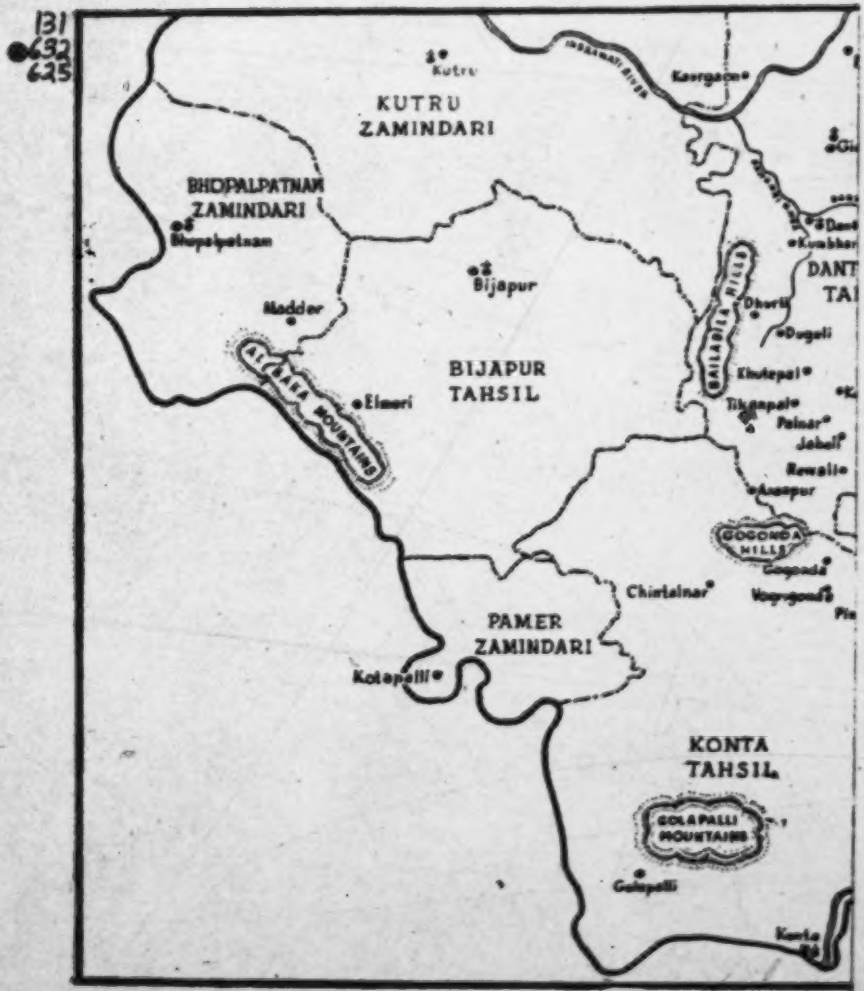

[Facing p. 18(A)]

3: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1943
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[Facing p. 18(B)]

3: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1943
AW32 Gond AW32
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322 on the main road from Jagdalpur to Dantewara. Near
766 Massenar at the end of a long line of menhirs is the pillar in memory of the famous Kopa Dhurwa, which has a carving of the old man wearing his jubilee medal. There are others at Chinger, on the way to Chitrakot and in a few other places.

322 Each pillar attempts to be a biography in wood of the
766 deceased. We see him important carrying the symbols of
532 wealth and power and riding on a horse or elephant; we see the dancers that delighted him and the landa pot which never failed to give him pleasure. We are shown the knives and axes that he used; the animals that he saw or hunted in the forest. The pillar for Oyami Masa, the homicide, had several carvings illustrating his work as a Siraha.

X

623 Every Maria village has a panel of secular and religious
632 officials. There is the headman (often called the Peda), his assistant (the Kanaki) and a Kotwar, who has the duty of reporting to the police all births and deaths within his jurisdiction. Each group of villages belongs to what is called a Pargana, a relic of the older administrative system of the State, and at the head of each Pargana there is a Pargana Manjhi. Each village has its panchayat presided over by the village headman, and each Pargana has a Pargana panchayat which is a Court of Appeal. In 1932, the village panchayats among all the aboriginals in Bastar were entrusted with a certain amount of criminal and civil work. The regular Courts were deprived of jurisdiction over the tribesmen for no fewer than seventeen Sections of the Indian Penal Code, including those dealing with simple hurt and assault, thefts of property up to five rupees, mischief, trespass and adultery. The panchayats were permitted to deal with claims for civil damages that might arise out of the criminal offences, and in other civil claims not exceeding twentyfive rupees. They were permitted to impose fines of not more than twentyfive, and in marriage cases to allow expenses up to fifty rupees. The Kotwar had the business of reporting panchayat decisions to the police. An appeal

3: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1943
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623 lay to the Pargana Manjhi and his panchayat which consisted [623] of four headmen chosen from his group of villages.

In the ten years since these panchayats were established, they have done a great deal of work, and on the whole may be said to have functioned very well. A few headmen have abused their positions; there has been a certain amount of diversion of fines to uses for which they were not intended; probably a number of less influential people have not always had the justice that they might have expected. But this might have happened even in the ordinary Courts, and there is no doubt whatever that the establishment of these panchayats has done a great deal to build up the self-respect of Maria and Muria, and has developed leadership among them.

622 The importance of the panchayat for our subject is 623 obvious. In the first place, it provides a body of semi-official elders in every village whose duty it is to assist the police, and indeed whenever a suspicious death occurs in a village, the investigating officer calls the panchayat for a sort of inquest to which he acts as coroner and they as jury. On the other hand, the establishment of the village elders in a position of considerable authority makes it easy for them, when they wish to do so, to conceal a crime or deal with it themselves. Where a headman is himself the culprit, he may force the people to hush up his guilt; and the solidarity that is created by allowing the village under its own elders to settle many of its own affairs helps the headman to attain this end. This is no argument against the establishment of the panchayat. But it does mean that it is important for the authorities to hold the confidence of the headmen, and to inspire them constantly with a sense of their civic duties.

793 Side by side with the secular leaders are the religious elders of the village, though there is no reason why spiritual and secular functions should not be, as they often are, combined in the same persons. The priests and medicine-men naturally have more influence than the official headmen, the most powerful combination being when the headman himself is a Waddai or Siraha.

Chief among the religious elders is the Bhum-Gaita or Perma, the priest of the soil whose duty it is to see to all the sacrifices concerned with the village and its festivals, and